Case Study: Promoting Zero Tolerance of Trafficking in Persons by Online Training

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Introduction

Trafficking in persons is one of the largest criminal enterprises in the world—second only to illegal drugs (U.S. Department of Defense, 2009). At its worst, human trafficking involves transporting women and children from their homes to foreign countries, and requiring them to work as prostitutes to repay their debt for transportation. In 2002, then U.S. President Bush issued a National Security Presidential Directive mandating a "zero tolerance" policy toward trafficking in persons. In addition, the Department of Defense issued DoD Instruction 2200.01 (U.S. Department of Defense, 2007) to deter DoD personnel from engaging in activities that may create a demand for human trafficking, such as hiring foreign prostitutes.
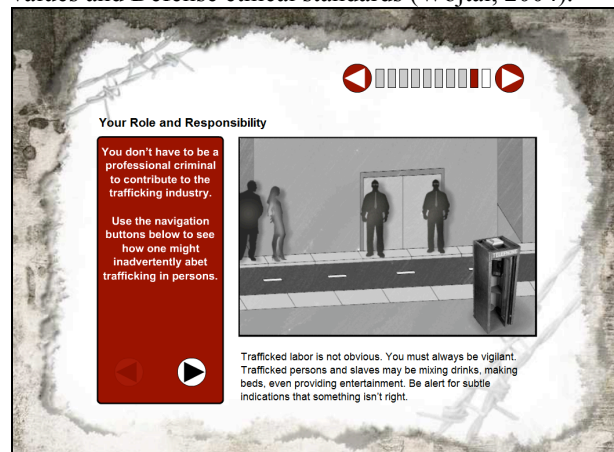

DoD Trafficking in Persons poster (US Department of Defense, 2010a)

Both this instruction and a preceding memorandum (U.S. Department of Defense, 2004) called for commanders at all levels to ensure that their units are made aware of issues surrounding human trafficking. To help achieve this, DoD commissioned the Academic Advanced Distributed Learning Co-Laboratory (AADL) to create an online training module (Wojtal, 2004) about combating trafficking in persons (TiP).

The Training Course

The AADL-authored training course focuses on the global scope of human trafficking, techniques for its detection, and the U.S. DoD policy against it (Wood, 2006). This training is mandatory for all military members and DoD civilians. The goal of the training is to make people aware of the extent of the problem and to help them to understand their personal responsibilities in combating its practice consistently with military core values and Defense ethical standards (Wojtal, 2004).

Combating Trafficking in Persons awareness training (US Department of Defense, 2009)

The course is SCORM-conformant, so that a single version of the course can be deployed by each Service on its "Knowledge Now" portal. In addition, the course is available from the DoD Inspector General Web site and the Joint Knowledge Online portals.

Benefits from Online Instruction

Fulfilling mandatory training requirements—In describing the course, one policy analyst from the U.S. Marine Corps noted that the online format is particularly beneficial for this mandatory course as it "standardizes the training, makes it widely accessible, and provides completion tracking for unit leaders" (Bohanner, 2005, p. 1). Trainees must complete a short quiz at the end of the training that provides a record of course completion, making it easy for the Services to track compliance with this important directive. The training must be completed annually by all Service members, so it logged over 160,000 completions in FY 2009 for the Navy alone (U.S. Navy, 2009).

Deployment efficiencies—By developing a SCORM-conformant course that is deployable across many learning systems, DoD saved its components from duplicative development, while allowing them to track training completion independently.

In addition to its use in the U.S., DoD gave the course to one of the U.S.'s international partners, the Norwegian

Department of Defense (NoD) to reuse. Using the RELOAD Editor, the NoD easily customized the training, removing a SCO that covered U.S. law (Isaksen & Roceanu, in press).

*Outcomes—*Provisional evidence suggests that greater awareness has resulted in a reduction of human trafficking-related incidences among DoD personnel and contractors. Searches of four DoD law enforcement databases revealed only one investigation in FY2009 (U.S. Department of Defense, 2010b). This complaint was resolved without disciplinary action.

Greater awareness has also resulted in the inclusion of anti-trafficking stipulations in 51% of DoD contracts, according to a 2009 survey (U.S. Department of Defense, 2010b). DoD's eventual goal is to include these provisions in all relevant contracts.

Conclusion

This case study highlights how the ADL-developed SCORM has benefited the deployment of DoD courses and thereby achieved DoD training goals. Specifically, designing mandatory training as a SCORM-conformant course has allowed DoD to broadly disseminate information across the Services and partner nations without incurring duplicative development costs. In addition, hosting the course on learning management systems has allowed DoD organizations to manage and track course completions independently.

References

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